

FONDAZIONE
PALAZZO MAGNANI
REGGIO EMILIA

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS FOR THE ARTISTIC DIRECTORSHIP
OF THE "FOTOGRAFIA EUROPEA"
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL (2027 / 2029 EDITIONS)

ANNEX D
THE CITY AND ITS CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

Reggio Emilia is a medium-sized city (approximately 172,500 inhabitants) with a vibrant population: in 2024, it recorded the highest growth rate in Emilia-Romagna. It has a young population by national standards — with a higher proportion of minors (15.7 per cent) and a lower proportion of older people (21.7 per cent) than the Italian average — and is markedly diverse, with almost one in five residents born abroad and Albanian, Moroccan, Ukrainian, Egyptian and Moldovan communities forming a linguistic and generational mosaic that is now an integral part of the city's identity.

Economically, it is a prosperous and industrious city, rooted in manufacturing excellence — mechatronics, advanced engineering and agri-food — with a strong focus on exports and household incomes growing at a rate above the national average. This productive prosperity coexists with a long-standing civic culture, characterised by cooperatives and associations, which has historically invested in education, welfare and participation as common goods.

The resulting 'cultural mood' is pragmatic yet open-minded: a city that views **culture as an educational and relational process** rather than as mere consumption. An experimental and participatory ethos prevails, with a focus on children, pedagogy and the community dimension of cultural creation; a sensibility that values the atelier, the workshop, the neighbourhood and collaboration between diverse groups. Immigration and the changing social fabric are fuelling a growing demand for intercultural spaces, contemporary forms of expression and opportunities for people of different generations and backgrounds to come together.

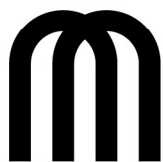
It is therefore a context receptive to projects that combine innovation, inclusion, local roots and openness to the world: a community accustomed to networking, with both spending power and a culture of volunteering, which rewards initiatives capable of transforming diversity into a resource and culture into a tool for social cohesion and active citizenship.

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PALAZZO MAGNANI FOUNDATION

The Palazzo Magnani Foundation is a participatory foundation (founding members: the Province of Reggio Emilia, the Municipality of Reggio Emilia, Iren Spa) which, for 30 years, has been dedicated to promoting the visual arts and organising cultural events and live performances.

It has been organising Fotografia Europea since the 2017 edition and manages the following exhibition venues: **Palazzo Magnani**, **Palazzo Da Mosto** and **the Chiostri di San Pietro**.

Apart from the period of Fotografia Europea, when the Festival takes over all the venues, during the autumn and winter months, the exhibitions at Palazzo Magnani tend to be dedicated to research-based projects on historical themes and artists, particularly from the 20th century, both nationally and internationally; Palazzo Da Mosto, on the other hand, is dedicated to the rediscovery of artists and themes more closely linked to the history of the city and the local area; finally, the Chiostri di San Pietro are dedicated to photography and contemporary art.

The Foundation also organises two national festivals aimed at younger audiences: **Reggionarra**, in collaboration with Reggio Children and local nurseries and pre-schools, designed for children and families; and **Internazionale Kids**, produced by the editorial team of the magazine of the same name, dedicated to young people.

During the summer, it manages a significant part of the **'Restate'** programme, comprising live performances, in close collaboration with the city's other cultural institutions.

A significant proportion of its work is devoted to education and **cultural welfare**, where it plays an active role in regional and national networks aimed at researching the scientific evidence linking art and culture to wellbeing and health.

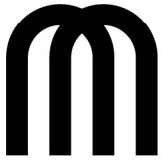
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NATIONAL DANCE FOUNDATION / ATERBALLETO

In recent years, Aterballetto has established itself as one of the leading driving forces behind Italian contemporary dance and a key player on the international scene. Through the production of innovative performances, collaboration with world-renowned choreographers and support for young creators and performers, the company has contributed to the renewal of choreographic language, fostering dialogue between dance, theatre, music, the visual arts and new technologies. Its extensive touring and international co-productions have strengthened the presence of Italian dance at major European festivals and theatres, promoting the country's artistic excellence.

At the same time, Aterballetto has played a strategic role in Reggio Emilia's cultural policies. The Fonderia venue, which has become **the National Choreographic Centre**, is now a space for production, training, research and public engagement, open to all citizens. Through educational projects, initiatives aimed at schools, interventions in public spaces and collaborations with the region's leading cultural institutions, Aterballetto has helped to make culture a tool for **inclusion, innovation** and **urban development**. In this way, the company has consolidated Reggio Emilia's identity as a city of contemporary creativity, strengthening its cultural appeal and its ability to engage with national and European networks.

Impact on Reggio Emilia's cultural policies

The most notable contribution concerns the transformation of the Fonderia into a National Choreographic Centre, one of only a few in Italy. The venue is not only the company's headquarters but also a cultural facility open to the city, featuring:

- a season of performances;
- open rehearsals;
- educational activities;
- workshops for schools and the public;
- artist residencies;
- collaborations with Festival Aperto, the Palazzo Magnani Foundation, I Teatri di Reggio Emilia and other local institutions.

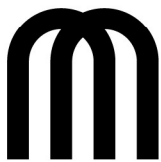
www.aterballetto.it

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I TEATRI FOUNDATION

The Fondazione I Teatri is one of the city of Reggio Emilia's leading cultural institutions and fulfils a public role that extends beyond the programming of performances. Although it is a private-law foundation, it works in close collaboration with Reggio Emilia City Council, which is its main sponsor and supports its mission to promote, produce and disseminate culture, contributing to the enhancement of the city's theatrical heritage and the cultural development of the community.

Established in 2002, the I Teatri Foundation has developed an integrated cultural system comprising the **Teatro Municipale Valli**, the **Teatro Ariosto** and the **Teatro Cavallerizza**.

The relationship between Reggio Emilia and its Teatro Municipale is one of the most defining features of the city's cultural history. More than just a venue for performances, the Teatro Municipale has, since its inception, been an expression of Reggio Emilia's civic identity and of the role that culture has played in public life. The history of the Teatro Municipale illustrates how, in Reggio Emilia, the theatre has always been perceived as a common good.

The Fondazione I Teatri's relationship with the city takes the form of building networks with other cultural and educational institutions, with the aim of broadening access to culture and engaging diverse audiences. The Foundation collaborates regularly with municipal libraries, civic museums, schools, the university, associations and other cultural foundations to carry out interdisciplinary projects that bring together theatre, music, the visual arts, history and literature. The City Council promotes an integrated cultural system, within which the Fondazione I Teatri works alongside the city's main institutions.

Another area of collaboration is **Fotografia Europea**, the international festival promoted by the Municipality of Reggio Emilia and the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani. Over the years, the Fondazione I Teatri has actively participated in the festival's programme by producing and hosting shows, performances, installations and interdisciplinary projects that bring theatre, music, photography and the visual arts into dialogue.

Among the most significant examples is ***Opera Aperta*** (2021), the photographic project by **Alex Majoli**, commissioned by the Fondazione I Teatri and the Reggio Parma Festival in collaboration with Fotografia Europea. The initiative transformed the city into a widespread exhibition space through large-scale photographic installations situated in the historic centre and outlying neighbourhoods, accompanied by public events and opportunities for reflection on the relationship between theatre, urban space and the community.

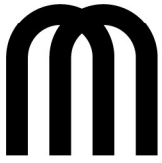
This collaboration has continued in the festival's most recent editions through joint initiatives with

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the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani. For example, on the occasion of Fotografia Europea 2026, an agreement was put in place that combined visits to the exhibitions with the theatres' opera season, offering festival visitors discounted tickets to **Maurice Ravel's *L'Heure espagnole***. This initiative is a concrete example of coordination between the city's main cultural institutions to encourage public participation and build an integrated cultural offering.

These experiences confirm the role of the Fondazione I Teatri not only as a manager of theatre venues, but as a permanent partner in the city's major cultural projects, helping to build a network involving the Municipality of Reggio Emilia, the Fondazione Palazzo Magnani, the Civic Museums, the Panizzi Library, universities and other local organisations, with the aim of promoting culture as a driver of social development and international appeal.

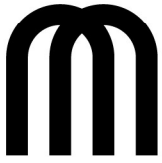
www.iteatri.re.it

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CIVIC MUSEUMS

Over time, the system of collections, historic sites and exhibition spaces offered by the Civic Museums of Reggio Emilia has helped shape the cultural identity of the people of Reggio Emilia. The museums document and showcase the natural, archaeological, artistic and historical heritage of the entire province, in a panorama spanning all five continents. Collections spanning from the Palaeolithic era to the present day are presented across five museum venues and two historic sites. This heritage of works and buildings has grown over many decades, with the offerings continually updated, and its origins date back just over 200 years.

The earliest foundation of the collections, in fact, dates back to **1799** with the acquisition by the city of Reggio Emilia of the private collection of the distinguished scientist **Lazzaro Spallanzani**, who, in his home in Scandiano, had amassed zoological, palaeontological, mineralogical, lithological and botanical specimens, as well as furnishings such as paintings, side tables and ornaments. The collection, preserved in its entirety as it was in the 18th century, has been housed in the rooms of the Palazzo dei Musei since 1830.

In **1862**, thanks to the work of the priest **Gaetano Chierici**, one of the founding fathers of modern palaeontology, the Gabinetto di Storia Patria was established, which in 1870 became **the Museo di Storia Patria**.

In 2021, with the opening of the second floor of the Palazzo dei Musei – designed by **Italo Rota** and the curators of the Civic Museums – a long process of rethinking the collections and the significance the museum has acquired within the community was brought to a close.

In the four galleries arranged in a quadrangle, the exhibition layout proceeds in two directions: vertically, as an episodic narrative, and horizontally, as a 'serial narrative' unfolding across several episodes and centred on the museum's artefacts, some of which come from the storage depots and others from local institutions. The exhibition presents a narrative spanning from the prehistory of the Reggio Emilia area, through the Etruscan presence and the Roman conquest, to the early Middle Ages – enriched with references to exceptional artefacts preserved in the historical collections. The art-historical section continues from the age of **the House of Este** to **the first** revolutionary and unifying **Tricolour**, from **Antonio Fontanesi** to the contemporary era represented by the vast photographic heritage – the result of works collected or commissioned by the municipal administration from artists who took part in the **Fotografia Europea** project – and concludes with the permanent section, featuring rotating exhibitions dedicated to the work of **Luigi Ghirri**.

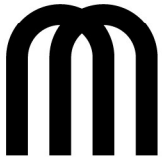
The historic home of the Civic Museums is now part of a network that also includes other venues,

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comprising five museum sites which, in addition to the **Palazzo dei Musei**, include the **Galleria Parmeggiani**, the **Museo del Tricolore**, the **Museum of the History of Psychiatry** and the **Museum of the Temple of the Blessed Virgin of Ghiara**. The network also includes two historic buildings (the **Mauriziano** and the **Chiostri di San Pietro**) and the **Biblioteca delle Arti**.

The Civic Museums, whilst pursuing the long-standing aim of preserving the heritage of the city of Reggio Emilia and the surrounding province, have simultaneously promoted scientific research, knowledge and public access, including through training and educational activities.

www.musei.re.it

Young Italian Photography

Giovane Fotografia Italiana is a project run by Reggio Emilia City Council which, since 2012, has been promoting emerging talents in contemporary photography in Italy through a free annual open call aimed at artists under 35, whether Italian or foreign nationals resident in Italy.

Since 2012, Giovane Fotografia Italiana has selected and supported the work of 104 photographers.

Thanks to its collaboration with **the Luigi Ghirri Foundation**, from 2022 the

the prize has been named after the great master, paying tribute to his artistic legacy.

Over the course of its editions, Giovane Fotografia Italiana has established a successful model that combines curatorial selection, professional support and international promotion. **Giovane Fotografia Italiana | Luigi Ghirri Prize** is now a key reference point in the cultural landscape of emerging young photography in Italy.

The project promotes photography focused on artistic research, employing innovative and interdisciplinary approaches, which encourages critical engagement with contemporary issues, in keeping with the

and the thinking of Luigi Ghirri.

GFI supports the work of emerging artists who use the medium of photography to reflect on its role in today's visual culture and on the themes of the contemporary world

Each edition proposes a theme for reflection, in dialogue with the programme of the **Fotografia Europea** festival, which takes place annually between April and June.

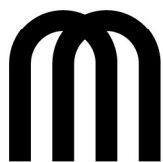
<https://gfi.comune.re.it>

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PANIZZI LIBRARY

In 2009, Reggio Emilia was recognised as a 'City of Books' by the national award of the Forum del Libro Association. This important accolade, which honours the city and, through it, its library services, has a very long history.

The year is **1796**, and Napoleon's invasion of Italy brings about a complete political upheaval across the Po Valley. On 25 August, the city of Reggio Emilia rebels against Duke Ercole III d'Este, and the City Senate proclaims the birth of the 'Reggiana Republic', which shortly afterwards merges into the Cispadane Republic and then the Cisalpine Republic.

One of the first institutions established at the behest of the citizens of Reggio Emilia was a **public library**, which was founded in October 1796 under the name '**Libreria Nazionale**'. The new library was housed in Palazzo San Giorgio, formerly the Jesuit College, and its collection consisted of duplicate volumes from the ducal and university libraries of Modena, as well as the holdings of the libraries belonging to the suppressed religious orders. On 31 January 1798, the library opened to the public, and from 1802 the post of librarian was taken up by Abbot **Gaetano Fantuzzi**, who, owing to his great dedication to acquiring and reorganising the book collection, can be considered the true founder of Reggio Emilia's public library.

Under the directorship of Maurizio Festanti (1976–2010) and Giordano Gasparini (2010–2021), the Panizzi Library has established itself as **one of Italy's most advanced and innovative libraries**. As early as 1983, the library introduced a computerised lending service and continues to this day to integrate analogue and digital services, promote reading and highlight its historical and special collections, welcome scholars and provide spaces for all other categories of users.

www.bibliotecapanizzi.it

Photo Library

The Photo Library acquires, preserves and catalogues the collection of images that historically document the city of Reggio Emilia and the surrounding area, and serves as an irreplaceable research tool for local history.

The collection documents local history from the mid-19th century to the present day in all its various facets: events, notable figures, architecture, urban planning, and the cultural heritage of the ' ' city and the province. Part of the collection also provides significant insight into the history of photography.

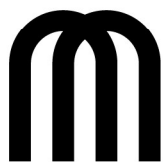
The Photographic Archive holds over a million photographs produced using various photographic

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processes: daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, ferrotypes, salted paper prints, albumin prints, silver bromide gelatine prints, postcards, glass negatives, slides and colour negatives.

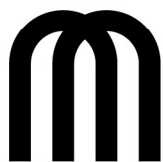
<https://www.bibliotecapanizzi.it/in-panizzi/sezione-di-conservazione-e-storia-locale/fototeca>

Luigi Ghirri Archive

The Luigi Ghirri Archive, held at the Panizzi Library, comprises more than 180,000 items and includes colour negatives and slides in various formats. It also contains more than 1,000 vintage prints and proofs, donated by the artist, as well as reprints produced by **Arrigo Ghi** under the supervision of **Paola Borgonzoni Ghirri** for the retrospective exhibition held in Reggio Emilia in 2001.

The archive of negatives and slides was transferred to the Panizzi Library in accordance with the wishes of Luigi Ghirri, who, from 1980, began an intensive collaboration with the city's municipal administration, organising exhibitions and meetings and carrying out projects. Following his death, his heirs honoured the artist's wishes and his archive was donated in its entirety to the Institute for Cultural Heritage of the Emilia-Romagna Region; it is now held at the Panizzi Library's **Photo Library**. An inventory of this collection has been compiled for internal use, indexed by geographical subject, by names of individuals and by the titles of the artist's research projects. The prints, both vintage and modern, are catalogued and available to view in the digit.a.re (Digital Archives Reggio Emilia) catalogue, in particular the images relating to the following projects: Italian Landscape; Gardens in Europe; Explorations along the Via Emilia; View with Camera.

<https://www.bibliotecapanizzi.it/in-panizzi/archivi/archivi-di-persona/luigi-ghirri/>



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PERI MERULO MUSIC CONSERVATORY

The Reggio Emilia and Castelnovo ne' Monti Conservatoire of Music aims to ensure that its three-year first-level diploma courses and two-year second-level diploma courses, as well as its teaching support services, music production activities and library services, are able to meet the needs and expectations of students and, more generally, of all those interested in a comprehensive academic and cultural musical education, as required by the national and international professional networks in the sector.

The school, named after the Reggio-born composer **Achille Peri** who led it in the mid-19th century, has very ancient origins, rooted in the rich musical traditions of the Emilian cities that developed around local authorities attentive to the productive activities of theatres and the need for training facilities for young instrumentalists and singers. In the 1970s, coinciding with the state's recognition of its equivalent status, under the leadership of **Armando Gentilucci**, it flourished and became one of the most interesting institutions amongst Italian conservatoires. **Musica-Realtà's** activities include the publication of one of the most established journals in the field of musicology, as well as concerts and educational seminars focused primarily on contemporary music.

Artistic production projects are constantly pursued, including those staged externally; the institution fosters the growth of its youth orchestras; and it maintains high standards of teaching, with particular attention paid to the two-year Level II courses, which feature principal players from orchestras of national and international standing and prestigious soloists. With its annual courses, artistic productions, masterclasses and **summer school**, the 'Peri-Merulo' now runs activities throughout the entire twelve months of the year.

www.consperimerulo.it

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